

Exploring Convergence – Still in Progress (Spring 2021)

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Warm Up

After many years we meet again in 2018 during a week of practical research about contact improvisation in Switzerland. We figure that we both had turned towards dance research, we both still dance and teach and study dance improvisation and investigate and explore ways to articulate the meanings and the knowledge of improvisation. We start thinking about how to let our research trajectories converge.

Moving Towards Each Other

2019 we meet on the same dance floor in the same practice research meeting in Bern. We start exchanging about methodologies, artistic research, phenomenology, auto-ethnography. Interesting. We decide to improvise in the hallway and ask our colleague Peter Aerni to record us. That way we can feel how it feels to engage with each other compositionally. That way we can see if we consider the aesthetic outcome to hold some promise. We do not look at the resulting video, instead we ask Peter to also make some photos and we decide to make a convergence happen within the coming year.

Leaning Closer Into Each Other while Reaching Out

We apply to the SAR Conference 2020 in Bergen, to give ourselves a frame, a deadline, a commitment to start to bring our respective research closer together. We know that our presentation at SAR is not about outcomes but about sharing our beginning. The conference strand “various rehearsals” supports our wish to offer our artistic research colleagues a beginning, not an end.

First rehearsals

We schedule, plan trips, reserve studio space. Our first rehearsal period is one of letter writing, so that when we meet to dance we already have developed a deeper understanding about each other’s research projects, concepts, and terms.

Time to Diverge

We write two letters each and then the conference is cancelled, international travelling stops being an option, the energy for letter writing leaves both of us abruptly. We have other things to manage now.... We each continue our respective research on improvisation, dance, touch, meaning-making, learning, sense-making, facing differences and recognizing commonalities in and through dance improvisation. We can imagine how each of us faces online teaching, maybe explores instant-online-compositions, arranges the home office, and wonders how to deal with presence / touch / contact / kinesthetic intersubjectivity / training / creating dance... but we do not have the energy to keep each other updated.

We wait for the next convergence to come when the time is right.

All photos and the video are by Peter Aerni (<https://www.peteraerni.ch/>).

Thank you Peter.